



Portland Harbor Superfund Site Update

Portland Harbor Community Advisory Group Meeting - December 10, 2008

Here is a brief run down of what happened in 2008 and what is coming up next:

Remedial Investigation nearing completion: In early 2008, data collection for the remedial investigation and baseline risk assessment was completed. This information filled remaining data gaps that were identified for stormwater, surface water (high and low flow events), biota sampling, bioassays with co-located sediment samples and upstream and downstream areas. The data from these final sampling events has been analyzed so that it can be included in the Remedial Investigation and Risk Assessment Reports, which are due out in early summer 2009.

Feasibility Study: As the investigation of Portland Harbor wraps up, the focus shifts to the Feasibility Study (FS). The FS will develop and screen alternatives for cleaning up Portland Harbor. Additional data gathering to support the FS was conducted in 2008 to gather information on contaminant mobility, identify debris that could impede cleanup work, and further define waterborne sediment associated with upstream and localized sources. The FS will be a large undertaking because of the size and complexity of the site.

Modeling: The Feasibility Study will use modeling to evaluate things that can't be measured directly, estimate relationships between sediment and tissue concentrations, and evaluate contaminant loading and movement in the study area. The food web model and the fate and transport model are two key efforts that you may want to learn more about.

Remedial Action Objectives and Preliminary Remediation Goals: The risk assessment will provide the basis for refining the remedial action objectives and developing preliminary remediation goals (PRGs). A range of PRGs will be developed for several different human health and ecological receptors, including fish consumption, direct contact with sediments, and the benthic community.

Areas of Potential Concern (AOPC) will be identified based on the results of the baseline ecological and human health risk assessments, preliminary remediation goals, modeling results and the spatial distribution of contamination

Sediment Management Areas (SMA): The AOPCs will be further refined into specific locations where cleanup actions are needed and then remedial alternatives will be developed and evaluated for each SMA.

Steps from the FS to the ROD: After the Lower Willamette Group produces the draft RI and FS; it will be carefully reviewed by EPA and the inter-governmental partners. It will also be available for public review. EPA and the LWG will host community workshops to share information on the key parts of these large technical documents.

Proposed Plan: Based on the FS, EPA will write a Proposed Plan, which summarizes the cleanup alternatives from the FS and proposes a preferred course of action. Public comments will be solicited for the Proposed Plan. Your input to the proposed plan will be very important in selecting the best course of action.

Getting to Cleanup: After public comment has been carefully considered, EPA will issue a Record of Decision (ROD) for Portland Harbor, which will include the agency's responses to public comments. After the decision, EPA will begin negotiations with PRPs for design and construction of the selected remedy.

Potentially Responsible Party (PRP) Search: EPA sent letters to 285 entities in January 2008 requesting information on contaminant handling and potential releases to the river. Information being provided to EPA is updated quarterly on the EPA Portland Harbor website.

Early Actions: A partial cleanup was completed at Port of Portland Terminal 4, Slip 3 and Wheeler Bay last summer through a combination of dredging and capping of contaminated sediment. The work also included feature to stabilize banks and enhance habitat. The second phase of the project, which will convert Slip 1 to a Confined Disposal Facility, was delayed to allow information from the harbor wide Feasibility Study to be included.

Work planning continues for cleanup of highly contaminated sediments at the Arkema site, and EPA is considering additional early action cleanup at the GASCO – Siltronic site.

Triangle Park: EPA is finalizing a consent decree that enables the University of Portland to purchase this property and return it to productive reuse as athletic fields and a public waterfront trail. The proposed settlement between EPA and Triangle Park LLC, the current property owner, and another settlement between EPA and the University will provide funding for an early removal action to perform source control, cleanup and redevelopment of the Triangle Park uplands in this segment of the Willamette River at approximately River Mile 7.5.

US Moorings: EPA is working with the US Army Corps of Engineers to assess contamination and cleanup needs at this facility located adjacent to GASCO. Data collected as part of this investigation will be added to the Portland Harbor database.

To find out more about EPA Portland Harbor topics:

Judy Smith, EPA, 503-326-6994, smith.judy@epa.gov

Portland Harbor website: <http://yosemite.epa.gov/R10/CLEANUP.NSF/sites/ptldharbor>.

Natural Resource Damages: Trustees from state agencies, federal agencies and tribes are moving forward with studies to determine the injury to natural resources in Portland Harbor and developing a restoration plan. (Erin Madden, Trustee Council Chair, 503-753-1310, erin.madden@gmail.com)

Public Health: The Oregon Environmental Health Assessment Program (EHAP) is finishing up a public health assessment for recreational users of Portland Harbor and will publish these findings in 2009. (Karen Bishop, EHAP 971-673-1219, karen.bishop@state.or.us)

Upland Source Control: DEQ continues their work cleaning up upland sites with dozens of industries and property owners along the shore of the Willamette River. It is important to avoid recontamination of river sediments. (Marcia Danab, DEQ, danab.marcia@deq.state.or.us
Report is at: <http://www.deq.state.or.us/lq/cu/nwr/PortlandHarbor/docs/MilestoneRpt0809.pdf>